LINCOLN

IN THE LIGHT OF HIS AGE

A CENTENARY MEMORIAL

BY

GEORGE T. LEMMON

WITH SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY

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coln's reply. The correction of Seward's dispatch to Adams which prevented war with England. The contest with the Senate, culminating when Lincoln had the resignations of Seward and Chase in his hands and ordered them both back to their posts. His offer to resign when Congressmen were demanding a course contrary to his conscience. The unique testimony to his magnanimity—attested without knowing what it really was by all members of his Cabinet—by which he pledged himself in the event of McClellan's election to call him into counsel and co-operate to end the war. In no other one volume but the second of this work can all these and other surprising revelations of that stormy period be found in exact correspondence or confession, and with such striking interpretation.

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LINCOLN STORIES.

These abound in this work. A Lincoln book without scintillations of his unfailing wit would be like Hamlet without Polonious, and that might be as great deficiency as the absence of the mystic Dane himself. Remember Emerson said that had not Lincoln's fame as a statesman eclipsed his glory as a storyteller he might have ranked with the creator of Æsop's Fables. The Compiler has not only entered the very best of Lincoln's stories but has set them amid the actual circumstances that drew them forth, and given with them an interpretation by some contemporary, or some study of Lincoln's use of humor; the whole will forever end any idea and all charges that he was merely a masterly buffoon. This much maligned side of Lincoln's daily life is shown in its actual greatness.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

The Compiler discovered that many living leaders in Church and State, well known to be sincere admirers of Lincoln, who in their public work must have spoken some hearty tribute to him, had not gotten such tribute into print and so accessible to the general reader. They deserved to be heard. Quite a number were of the race Lincoln freed and had advanced to prominence through the opportunities he procured them. Therefore, there was secured about fifty Special Contributions in interpretation and characterization of certain actions and speeches of Lincoln, and the value of the whole work is vastly enhanced by this very up-to-the-minute testimony to the War President's continuing fame. Among those who have made such Contributions are Generals Charles W. Grosvenor, Oliver O. Howard and Nelson A. Miles; Educators like David Starr Jordan, Booker T. Washington and Henry Van Dyke; Statesmen like William Jennings Bryan, Ben Tillman, John Sharp Williams; and Churchmen like Bishops Benjamin W. Arnett, Geo. W. Clinton, Alexander Mackey-Smith, Charles C. McCabe, Robert McIntyre, William A. Quayle, Benjamin T. Tanner, Alexander Walters, Henry W. Warren, and Doctors S. Parkes Cadman Francis E. Clark, Robert S. MacArthur, Henry H. Procter, Junius B. Remensnyder, and William Hayes Ward.

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SAMPLE PAGES.

Less than one page from each one hundred can scarcely hint at the real value of this great work, but may slightly indicate the meat and method. Selections have been chosen more to show conciseness, accuracy and variety of the text and credits than of entire pages as appearing in the finished book. We are sure that even these sample pages will be so prized as to be filed for future use—is not that big proof that the whole work would be prized?

73. There is enough in this personality, so fresh, so strong, so inspiring, to justify our highest pride in him, and to make us hold up this product of our land, whose earnest faith and indomitable purpose fit him to stand like a Modern Aristides or a New World Cato. But when the slow judgment of the years is made up, it will take the man of the West who led us through the fires of a terrible civil strife, and seeing how his achievement reached out to all mankind and secured the work which cost the toil and struggles of ages, will range him side by side with those who saved Greece from Persian barbarism, and those who saved Rome from Gallic anarchy, and those who gave this continent the free institutions of the English race.

John Coleman Adams, D.D.—Lincoln's Place in History— Century, Feb., 1894.

174. A gaunt, tall, form, a firm set head, with beetling brow, and "eyes from which the soul of an immortal sorrow looks:" a spirit baptized in that rain of blood which drenched the sod and the forest of the Southern States until his heart grew sick with grief; a spirit which embodies the woe of Lear and the tragedy of Hamlet, and which would have broken beneath the weight had it not been enlivened by the enjoyment of the "Merry Wives of Windsor," and the merriment of the "Midsummer Night's Dream." . . . The secret of Lincoln's greatness must be sought for in the evolution of family isolation, in the struggle with primal forces; in a state of society when men had no strong nation at their backs to sustain them in their rights, when they had to hew out for themselves a solution of every problem in their grapple with harsh conditions of life, and in conflict with the savage foe which still hung upon the borders of civilization. . . . When unseen fingers strike back the bolts which locked futurity, when this country shall have grown to be two hundred million people, when half of the earth's population shall speak the English tongue, when the dusky millions of distant lands shall learn to lisp the golden words of liberty, and free institutions are scattering blessings in every clime, then will the name of Lincoln as Liberator be on every lip, and nothing but the spaciousness of centuries can fitly frame the grandeur of his fame.

Hampton L. Carson, Speech, 90th Anniversary of Lincoln's Birth—Union League, Philadelphia, Feb. 13, 1899.

104. In grave emergencies, moderation is generally safer than radicalism; and as this struggle is likely to be long and earnest, we must not, by our action, repel any who are in sympathy with us in the main, but rather win all we can to our standard. We must not belittle nor overlook the facts of our condition—that we are new and comparatively weak, while our enemies are entrenched and relatively strong. They have the administration and the political power; and, right or wrong, at present they have the numbers. Our friends who urge an appeal to arms with so much force and eloquence, should recollect that the government is arrayed against us, and that the numbers are arrayed against us as well; or, to state it nearer to the truth, they are not yet expressly and affirmatively for us; and we should repel friends rather than gain them by anything savoring of revolutionary methods. As it now stands, we must appeal to the sober sense and patriotism of the people. We will make converts day by day; we will grow strong by calmness and moderation; we will grow strong by the violence and injustice of our adversaries. And, unless truth be a mockery and justice a hollow lie, we will be in the majority after a while, and then the revolution which we will accomplish will be none the less radical from being the result of pacific measures. The battle of freedom is to be fought out on principle. Slavery is a violation of eternal right. We have temporized with it from the necessities of our condition; but as sure as God reigns and school children read, THAT BLACK FOUL LIE CAN NEVER BE CONSE-CRATED INTO GOD'S HALLOWED TRUTH!

"Lost speech." Bloomington, Ill., May 29, 1856. Ida M. Tarbell—Life of Lincoln.

243. Lincoln's masterly habit of self suppression was hardly suspected at this time, and few then could have supposed that Douglas, accustomed to use language to express or mask his thought, was matched against a greater politician than Talleyrand—one who knew the last great secret of politics—that of going twain willingly with those who compelled him to go an unwilling mile.

William V. Byars. "Stephen A. Douglas," in The World's Best Literature. Vol. V.

244. He was as much the opposite of John Brown as one noble and good man could be of another. The one was anxious to cut knots with the sword, the other to loose them gradually, though it should take generations, even centuries, to effect it. The one chafed under the slowness of God's purposes; the other shrank from the rashness of precipitating His judgments through not adequately understanding them. The one was of the fiery, revolutionary temperament which assumes its divine commission and rushes into battle; the other of the vigilant, naturalistic temperament which watches the issue, and cannot believe that it has commission to fight till the tide of war interferes with the discharge of some plain and long accustomed duty."

The London Spectator, April, 1865.

192. I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here and framed and adopted that Declaration. I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but hope to all the world, for all future time. It was that which gave promise that in due time the weights would be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved on that basis? If it can, I will consider myself the happiest man in the world if I can help to save it. If it cannot be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it.

Address in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, Feb. 22, 1861.

459. And so he came.

From prairie cabin up to the Capitol,
One fair Ideal led our chieftain on.

Forevermore he burned to do his deed
With the fine stroke and gesture of a king.
He built the rail-pile as he built the State,
Pouring his splendid strength through every blow,
The conscience of him testing every stroke,
To make his deed the measure of a man.

Edwin Markham-Lincoln and Other Poems.

353. As I dwell on what I heard and saw of the mighty Westerner, and blend it with the history and literature of my age, and of what I can get of all the ages, and conclude it with his death, it seems like some tragic play, superior to all else I know-vaster and fierier and more convulsionary, for this America of ours, than Eschylus or Shakespeare ever drew for Athens or for England. . . . One of the best of the late commentators on Shakespeare (Dowden), makes the height and aggregate of his quality as a poet to be, that he thoroughly blended the ideal with the practical or realistic. If this be so, I should say that what Shakespeare did in poetic expression, Lincoln essentially did in his personal and official life. I should say the invisible foundations and vertebra of his character, more than any man's in history, were mystical, abstract, moral and spiritual—while upon all of them was built, and out of all of them radiated, under the control of the average of circumstances, what the vulgar call horse-sense, and a life often bent by temporary but most urgent materialistic and political reasons. . . . Lincoln seems to me the grandest figure yet, on all the crowded canvas of the Nineteenth Century.

Walt. Whitman-Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln.

753. Of the many great men whom war, diplomacy, and politics have raised upon the wings of human passions, none will, perhaps, enjoy a history, a fame, so pure and imperishable as he who, controlling the turbulent waves of the most colossal civil war of modern times, preserved order with liberty, and maintained the integrity of a great republic, while the bonds of its society were being broken into atoms by the advent of a new civilization. This will not be because history will present him brandishing a flaming sword over heaps of slain enemies, disposing in despotic councils of the fate of peoples, or erasing and changing the lines of territory; neither boldly putting foot on the unchained liberal spirit of his age; but because, as in all great revelations of truth to

man, the divine spirit of a great idea incarnated itself in an humble being, and inspired him with the faith, the courage, and the perseverance to draw it safely from the agitated ocean through the breakers, and in spite of hostile winds, to the port of safety and of triumph. The greatness of Lincoln consisted not so much in his talents, which were more solid than brilliant; nor in his education, which was neglected, as that of every man who, like him, is born and grows up in the bosom of poverty; neither in the sagacity of the politician nor the audacity of the tribune, or of the reformer; but in his manly good common sense, in the firmness of his character, in the instinctive sagacity with which he anticipated the genius and tendencies of his people, in his devoted patriotism, in his genial honesty, guileless frankness, the serenity of his spirit, in his unequalled capacity to follow without ever losing sight of the thread of events, and to adapt his efforts to the magnitude and actual stage of the crisis, and to give to the cause of an abstract idea all the interest of enthusiasm and of passion; above all, in raising himself from the narrow field of a local advocate to the immense field of passions, conflicting interests and opinions, which was suddenly lighted up before him by the devouring conflagration of civil war.

Salvador Camacho Roldan, President of the United States of Colombia—In La Opinion, Bogota, June 7, 1865.

405. If we reject and spurn them, we do our utmost to disorganize and disperse them. We, in effect, say to the white man, You are worthless or worse, we will neither help you, nor be helped by you. To the blacks we say, This cup of liberty which these, your old masters, hold to your lips we will dash from you, and leave you to the chances of gathering the spilled and scattered contents in some vague and undefined, when, where and how. If this course, discouraging and paralyzing to both white and black, has any tendency to bring Louisiana into proper practical relations with the Union, I have so far been unable to perceive it. If, on the contrary, we recognize and sustain the new-government of Louisiana, the converse of all this is made true. We encourage the hearts and nerve the arms of the twelve thousand to adhere to their work, and argue for it, and proselyte for it, and fight for it, and feed it, and grow it, and ripen it to a com-

plete success. The colored man, too, in seeing all united for him is inspired with vigilance and energy and daring, to the same end. Grant that he desires the elective franchise, will he not attain it sooner by saving the already advanced steps toward it than by running backward over them? Concede that the new government of Louisiana is only to what it should be as the egg is to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it.

Last Public Speech, April 12, 1865.

- 921. He was the epitome of magnanimity and good faith.

 General Robert E. Lee, Confederate.
- 922. Without doubt the greatest man of rebellion times, the one matchless among forty millions for the peculiar difficulties of the period was Abraham Lincoln.
 - Lieutenant-General James Longstreet, Confederate. Quoted in Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln.
- 923. Next to the day of the failure of the Confederacy, the darkest day the South has seen was the day of Lincoln's death.
 - Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy. In an interview with Col. A. K. McClure. McClure's Personal Recollections of Half a Century.
- 380. We know that he was a prose-poet; for have we not that immortal prose-poem recited at Gettysburg? We know that he was a statesman; for has not time vindicated his conclusions? But the South does not know, except as a kind of hearsay, that he was a friend—the one true friend who had the power and the will to save it from itself. He was the one man in public life who could have come to the head of affairs in 1861, bringing with him none of the embittered resentments growing out of the anti-slavery battle. Whilst Seward, Chase, Sumner and the rest had been engaged in hand to hand combat with the Southern leaders at Washington, Lincoln, a philosopher and a statesman, had been observing the course of events from afar, and like a philosopher and a statesman. The direst blow that could have been laid upon the prostrate South was delivered by the assassin's bullet that struck him down.

Henry Watterson, Editor Louisville Courier-Journal. Oration—Chicago, Feb. 12, 1895.

364. He was the Southern mother leaning forth,
At dead of night to hear the cannon roar,
Beseeching God to turn the cruel North
And break it that her son might come once more;
He was New England's maiden pale and pure,
Whose gallant lover fell on Shiloh's plain;
He was the mangled body of the dead;

He writhing did endure
Wounds and disfigurements and racking pain,
Gangrene and amputation, all things dread.
He was the North, the South, the East, the West,
The thrall, the master, all of us in one;
There was no section that he held the best;
His love shown as impartial as the sun;
And so revenge appealed to him in vain,
He smiled at it, as at a thing forlorn,
And gently put it from him, rose and stood

A moment's space in pain,
Remembering the prairies and the corn
And the glad voices of the field and wood.
Sleep! loss! But there is neither sleep nor loss,
And all the glory mantles him about;
Above his breast the precious banners cross,
Does he not hear his armies tramp and shout?
Oh, every kiss of mother, wife or maid
Dashed on the grizzly lip of veteran,
Comes forth right to that calm and quiet mouth,

And will not be delayed, And every slave, no longer slave but man, Sends up a blessing from the broken South.

Maurice Thompson—Lincoln's Grave—Read, Phi Beta Kappa—Harvard, 1893.

194. Our friends there (Philadelphia) had provided a magnificent flag of the country. They had arranged it so that I was given the honor of raising it to the head of its staff, and when it went up I was pleased that it went to its place by the strength of my own feeble arm. When according to the arrangement, the cord was pulled, and it floated gloriously to the wind, without an accident, in the bright, glowing sunshine of this morning, I could not help hoping that there was in the entire success of that

beautiful ceremony at least something of an omen of what is to come. Nor could I help feeling then, as I have often felt, that in the whole of that proceeding I was a very humble instrument. I had not provided the flag; I had not made the arrangements for elevating it to its place; I had applied but a very small portion of even my strength in raising it. In the whole transaction I was in the hands of the people who had arranged it, and if I can have the same generous co-operation of the people of the nation, I think the flag of our country may yet be kept flaunting gloriously.

Åddress to Legislature of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg. Feb. 22, 1861.

448. There was a momentary interval while the band played the Star Spangled Banner, and during this "brief waiting for the word," all eyes were on the President's face, in which there was the same curious problem of expression which has been more than once noticed by the close observer of that singular countenance—the two-fold working of the twofold nature of the man. Lincoln the Westerner, slightly humorous but thoroughly practical and sagacious, was measuring the "chore" that was to be done, and wondering whether the string was going to draw that heap of stuff through the hole in the top of the partition, determining that it should, but seeing clearly that it was mechanically a badly arranged job, and expecting the difficulty that did actually occur. Lincoln the President and statesman was another nature, seen in those abstract and serious eyes, which seemed withdrawn to an inner sanctuary of thought, sitting in judgment on the scene and feeling its far reach into the future. A whole man, and an exceedingly handy and joyous one, was to hoist the flag, but an anxious and reverent and deep-thinking statesman and patriot was to stand apart while it went up and pray God for its long waving and sacred welfare. Completely, and yet separately, the one strange face told both stories and told them well.

Nathaniel P. Willis, reporting a flag raising at Washington, in 1861.

308. I understand the meeting whose resolutions I am considering to be in favor of suppressing the rebellion by military force—by armies. Long experience has shown

that armies cannot be maintained unless desertion shall be punished by the severe penalty of death. The case requires, and the law and the Constitution sanction, this punishment. Must I shoot a simple-minded soldier boy who deserts, while I must not touch a hair of a wily agitator who induces him to desert? This is none the less injurious when effected by getting a father, or brother, or friend into a public meeting, and there working upon his feelings till he is persuaded to write the soldier boy that he is fighting in a bad cause, for a wicked administration of a contemptible government, too weak to arrest and punish him if he shall desert. I think that, in such a case, to silence the agitator and save the boy is not only constitutional, but withal a great mercy.

Letter to Erastus Corning in Reply to Resolutions of a Democratic Public Meeting at Albany, June 12, 1863.

942. Lincoln was to me always a wonder and mystery. . . . I could never quite fathom his thoughts, or be quite sure that I saw clearly along the line that he was working. But as I saw how he overcame obstacles and escaped entanglements, how he shunned hidden rocks and steered clear of treacherous shoals, as the tempest thickened, it grew upon me that he was wiser than the men around him. . . . The political sagacity of no other man was ever equal to that which enabled him to gather around him in earnest support of his administration, rivalries, opposing purposes, conflicting theories, and implacable enmities, which would have rent asunder any other administration. No one like him could turn aside, so that they hurt him not, the shafts of malice and detraction, or like him could compose strifes and poultice heart-burnings till enthusiasm drove out sulkiness. Whether it was in the small things or in the great things with which he had to deal he was equally matchless. . . . His development kept pace with the multiplying exigencies which confronted him, and he was never found wanting. He grew wiser and broader and stronger as difficulties thickened and perils multiplied, till the end found him the wonder in our history. His last public utterance, only three days before his death, when, taking the nation into his confidence as never before, he spoke of the controlling motive of the past, to what it had brought the nation thus far, and what was yet to be done, all put forth with a simplicity and power of speech no other man possessed, stands

unchallenged in the light of thirty years of subsequent study and experience of what was gained and what was lost when power passed into other hands.

Henry L. Dawes, Senator from Massachusetts—"A Wonder and a Mystery"—Lincoln, Tributes from His Associates.

303. The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party; and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect his purpose. I am almost ready to say that this is probably true; that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet. By his mere great power on the minds of the now contestants, he could have saved or destroyed the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And, having begun, he could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds.

Meditation on the Divine Will. Sept. 30 (?), 1862. The Germ of the Second Inaugural.

954. "O God! we thank Thee that, when needed most,
Thou raisedst this priest, this leader, for our aid,—
This model statesman, patriot, martyr, man,
The sum of all we honor and revere.
God-given! God-recalled! Go to thy grave
Hallowed by tears, the purest ever shed;
A nation's sobs and tears thy funeral hymn;
A nation's heart thy mausoleum grand;
A nation's gratitude thy deathless fame;
A nation saved thy labor's vast reward."—Anonymous.

956. I heard a little girl, that Sabbath morning, surprised that the robins were singing their old song, exclaim as she lifted a pained face to her parents: "I thought the birds would sing sad, now that President Lincoln is dead!"

Rev. Charles G. Everett, Congregationalist,

Bangor, Me. Sermon.

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The Publishers will be grateful to receive from all subscribers the names and addresses of Lincoln Lovers who might be interested in this work.